



Your Ref: P3273-2900-031042

Our Ref: FSK030020US25

Review of Documents Cited in European Search Report

1. Invention described in EP 0 737 876 A2

Figs. 6A-6F represent a second preferred method for making an optical fiber array (see column 13, line 7 to column 14, line 17 of the publication).

(1) In Fig. 6A, an alignment member 17 is disposed with alignment grooves 14 formed therein, and a mold release substance 16 such as Teflon is applied to the alignment grooves 14.

(2) In Fig. 6B, optical fibers 11 are received and positioned in the alignment grooves 14, and after an adhesive 15 is applied to the optical fibers 11 from above, a first plate-like part 12 is brought together with the alignment member 17.

(3) In Fig. 6C, the adhesive 15 is caused to cure by irradiation of UV light generated through the first part 12 so that the optical fibers 11 are adhesively held relative to the first part 12.

(4) In Fig. 6D, the optical fibers 11 having been adhered to the first part 12 are separated from the alignment member 17 provided with the alignment grooves 14. Here, the action of the above-mentioned mould release substance 16 allows the optical fibers 11 to easily separate from the alignment member 17.

(5) In Fig. 6E, a second plate-like part 13 to which an uncured adhesive 15 has been applied is positioned in opposed relation to the optical fibers 11 adhered to the first part 12.

(6) In Fig. 6F, an optical fiber array 10 is shown

which has been completed by causing the uncured adhesive 15 to cure upon irradiation of UV light generated through the second part 13 such that the optical fibers 11 are sandwiched between the first part 12 and the second part 13.

As is ascertained from the cross-sectional view of the optical fiber array 10 shown in Fig. 6F, the optical fibers 11 in the optical fiber array 10 are adhered in contact with the planes of the first and second parts 12, 13.

Consequently, EP 0 737 876 A2 does not disclose that an adjustment layer should be disposed which is required to satisfy the specified conditions of $(d_{\max} + r) < H$ in the claims now allowed in the present application. This publication merely discloses a conventional optical fiber array of Fig. 13 accompanying the present specification.

2. Invention described in JP 09 090105 A

Figs. A-E of the abstract represent a method for producing a rod array. Here, the term rod is used to construe as including a fiber as well (as described in paragraph 0010 of the publication).

(1) In Fig. A, rods 22 are housed and aligned in grooves 24 formed in a grooved flat plate 20.

(2) In Fig. B, a resin sheet 30 and a frame plate 32 are arranged above the arranged rods 22, and this resin sheet is pressurized in a viscous state under heating.

(3) In Fig. C, the frame plate 32 is separated from the grooved flat plate 20, and the rods 22 are half embedded in a resin 31.

(4) In Fig. D, the resin sheet 30 and the frame plate 32 are arranged alongside the rods of a rod arranging body 36 (see Fig. C) in a half embedded state, and the resin sheet is pressurized in a viscous state under heating.

(5) In Fig. E, a rod array 40 is shown which has been completed with the respective rods completely embedded between the frame plates 32.

As is ascertained from the cross-sectional view of the rod array 40 shown in Fig. E, the rods 22 in the rod array 40 are adhered in contact with the planes of the frame plates 32.

Thus, JP 09 090105 A does not disclose that an adjustment layer should be disposed which is required to satisfy the specified conditions of $(d_{\max} + r) < H$ in the present claims. This publication merely discloses a conventional rod array of Fig. 13 accompanying the present specification.

3. Inventions described in other documents

JP 56 021109 A merely discloses a conventional optical fiber for use as a film carrier. Further, EP 0 996 008 A (substantially equivalent to JP 2000-193844 relied upon in a prior Office Action in the present application) describes an optical fiber array which is the subject matter of a prior application filed by the present applicant. However, as set forth in your response to that Office Action, this publication discloses nothing relevant to the invention recited in claim 1 now allowed.

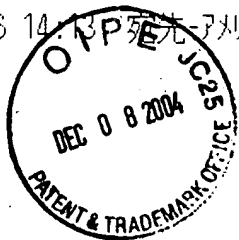


FIG. 6A

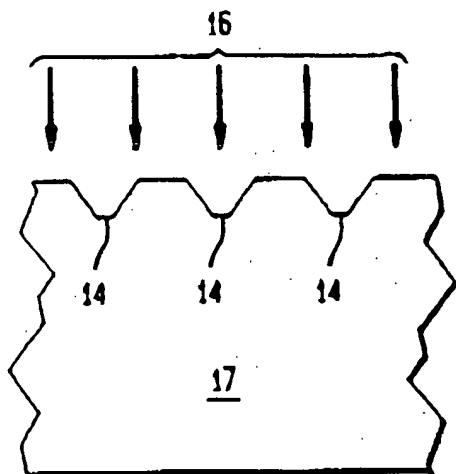


FIG. 6B

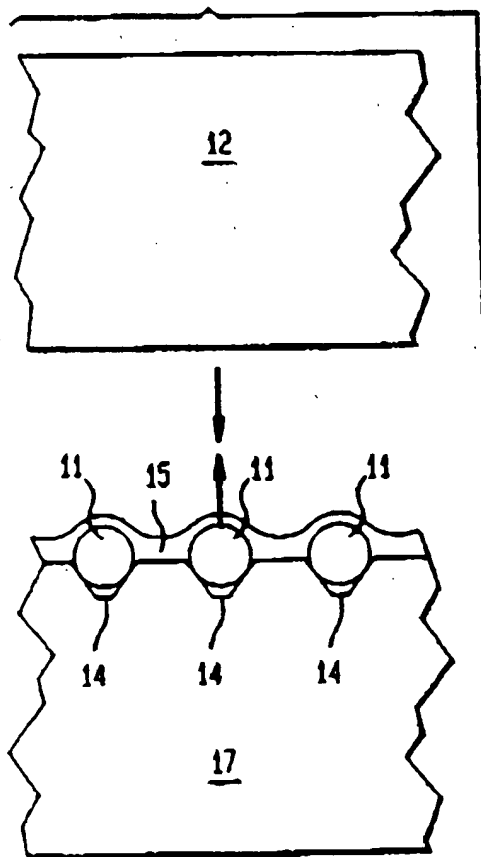


FIG. 6D

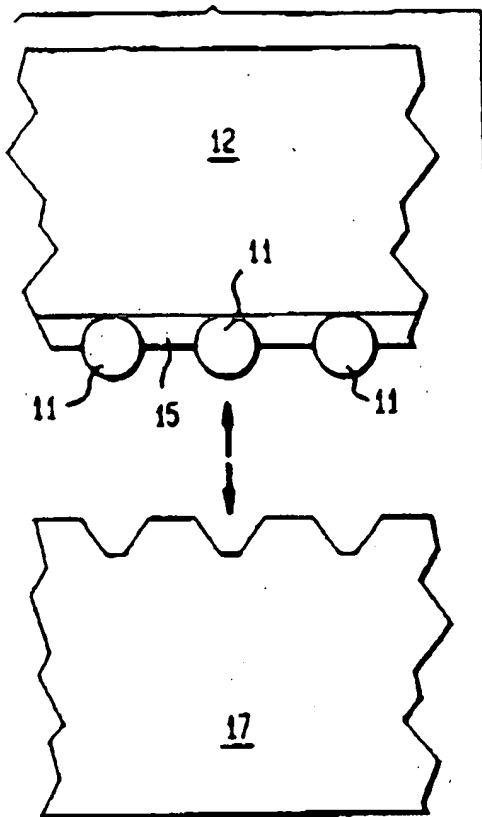
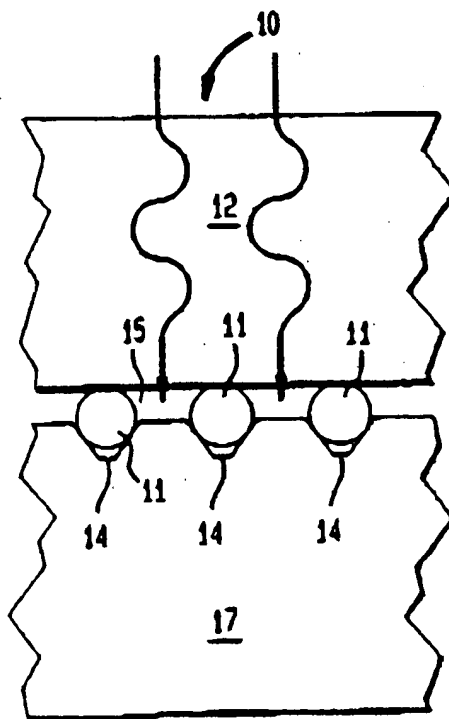


FIG. 6C





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FIG. 6E

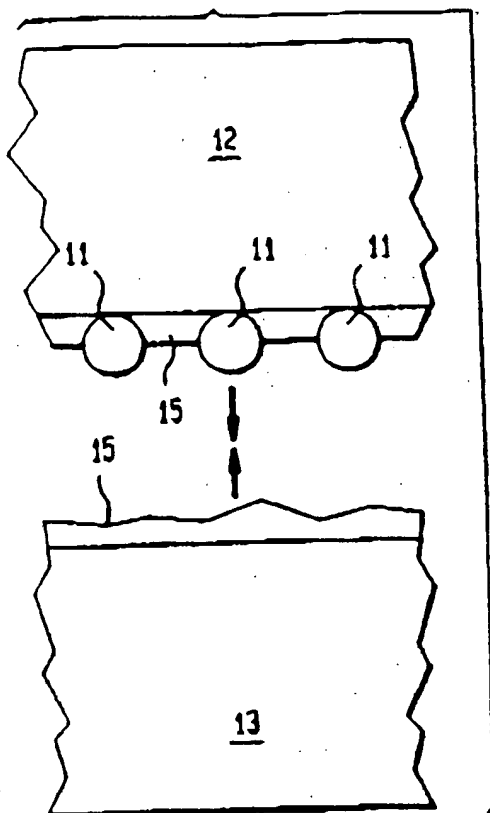


FIG. 6F

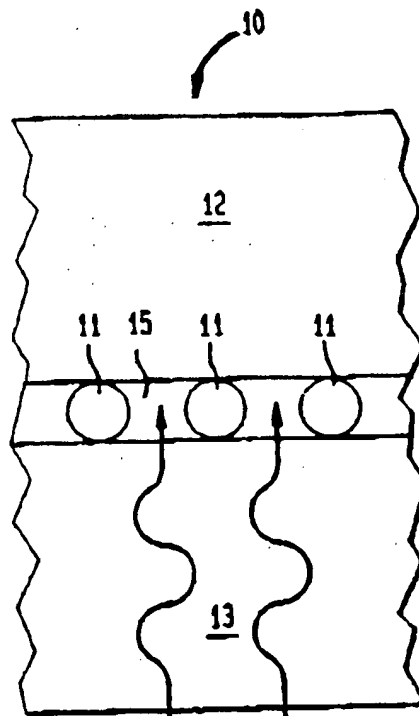


FIG. 7A

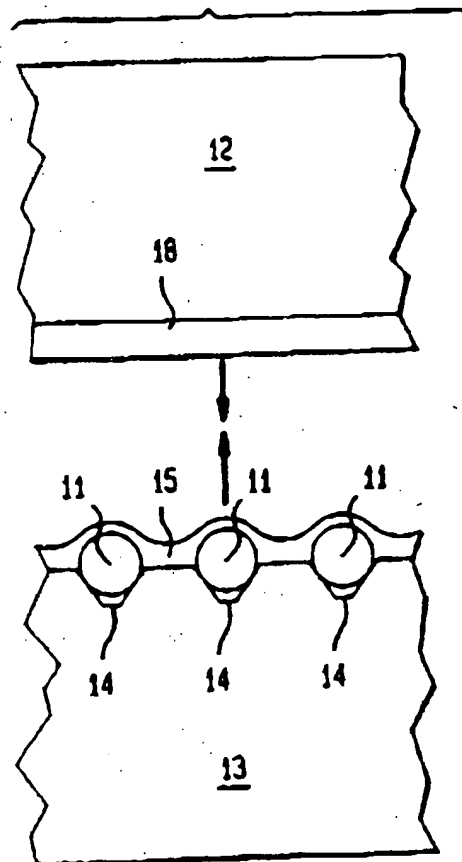
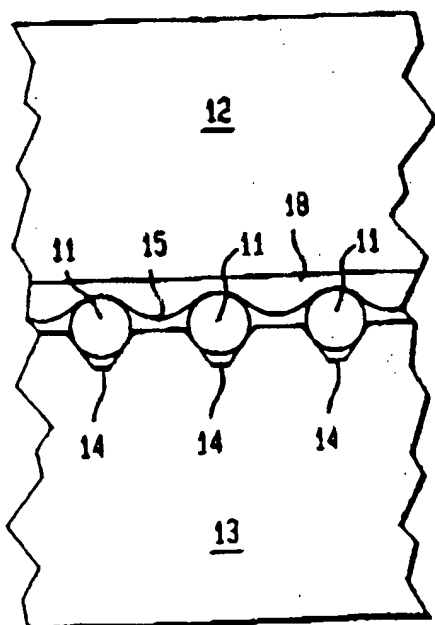


FIG. 7B



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